

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-36 (Cancelled)

37. (New) A method comprising:
- creating an exposure image in a radiation sensitive layer by exposing the radiation sensitive layer to patterned radiation; and
- modifying the exposure image by treating the exposure image with a heterogeneous thermal treatment including different heat flux.
38. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising specifying the heterogeneous thermal treatment by adjusting a height adjustable spacer.
39. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein said adjusting the height adjustable spacer comprises turning a screw.
40. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein said adjusting the height adjustable spacer comprises changing a voltage input to a piezoelectric substance.
41. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising specifying the heterogeneous thermal treatment by adjusting a plurality of height-adjustable spacers to a plurality of different heights.
42. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising determining the heterogeneous thermal treatment based at least in part on one or more errors in the exposure image.

43. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising reducing an error in the exposure image with the heterogeneous thermal treatment.
44. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein said treating the exposure image with the heterogeneous thermal treatment comprises providing a first heat flux to a first region of the exposure image and providing a second heat flux, which is different than the first heat flux, to a second region of the exposure image.
45. (New) The method of claim 44, further comprising determining the first heat flux based at least in part on an error in the first region and determining the second heat flux based at least in part on an error in the second region.
46. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein said modifying comprises providing a region of the layer containing a feature having a negative critical dimension undersizing error with a comparatively high thermal flux.
47. (New) The method of claim 37:
- wherein said creating the exposure image comprises creating a first critical dimension having an undersizing error and creating a second critical dimension having an oversizing error in a negative acting, chemically amplified resist; and
- wherein said modifying the exposure image comprises reducing the undersizing error by heating the first critical dimension to a first temperature at a particular time and heating the second critical dimension to a second temperature that is less than the first temperature at the particular time.
48. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising coupling a surface of a substrate having the radiation sensitive layer thereon with an insulator that is coupled with a height adjustable spacer that is coupled with a thermal energy source.

49. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein said creating the exposure image in the radiation sensitive layer comprises creating the exposure image in a negative acting, chemically amplified resist.
50. (New) A method comprising:
- creating an exposure image in a radiation sensitive layer by exposing the radiation sensitive layer to patterned radiation; and
- reducing one or more errors in the exposure image by treating the exposure image with a heterogeneous thermal treatment.
51. (New) The method of claim 50, further comprising specifying the heterogeneous thermal treatment by adjusting a height adjustable spacer.
52. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said adjusting the height adjustable spacer comprises turning a screw.
53. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said adjusting the height adjustable spacer comprises changing a voltage input to a piezoelectric substance.
54. (New) The method of claim 50, further comprising specifying the heterogeneous thermal treatment by adjusting a plurality of height-adjustable spacers to a plurality of different heights.
55. (New) The method of claim 50, further comprising determining the heterogeneous thermal treatment based at least in part on one or more errors in the exposure image.
56. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein treating the exposure image with the heterogeneous thermal treatment comprises providing a plurality of different heat flux to the exposure image.

57. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein said reducing the one or more errors in the exposure image comprises reducing a negative critical dimension undersizing error of a feature by providing a region of the exposure image containing the feature a comparatively high thermal flux.
58. (New) The method of claim 50:
- wherein said creating the exposure image comprises creating a first critical dimension having an undersizing error and creating a second critical dimension having an oversizing error in a negative acting, chemically amplified resist; and
- wherein said reducing the one or more errors comprises reducing the undersizing error by heating the first critical dimension to a first temperature at a particular time and heating the second critical dimension to a second temperature that is less than the first temperature at the particular time.
59. (New) The method of claim 50, further comprising coupling a surface of a substrate having the radiation sensitive layer thereon with an insulator that is coupled with a height adjustable spacer that is coupled with a thermal energy source.
60. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein said creating the exposure image in the radiation sensitive layer comprises creating the exposure image in a negative acting, chemically amplified resist.